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## CHANGE ORDER AND FIELD CHANGE APPROVAL PROCESSES

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# IR A-6

References: California Administrative Code, Sections 4-305 and 4-338  
Discipline: All

Revised 09-18-07  
Revised in its entirety 11-15-06  
Issued 9-1-99

This Interpretation of Regulation (IR) is intended for use by the Division of the State Architect (DSA) staff, and as a resource for design professionals, to promote more uniform statewide criteria for plan review and construction inspection of projects within the jurisdiction of DSA, which include State of California public elementary and secondary schools (grades K-12), community colleges, and state-owned or state-leased essential services buildings. This IR indicates an acceptable method for achieving compliance with applicable codes and regulations, although other methods proposed by design professionals may be considered by DSA.

This IR is reviewed on a regular basis and is subject to revision at any time. Please check the DSA web site for currently effective IR's. Only IR's listed in the document at <http://www.dsa.dgs.ca.gov/Pubs/default.htm> (click on "DSA Interpretations of Regulations Manual") at the time of plan submittal to DSA are considered applicable.

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**Purpose:** The Code requires that all changes to the approved plans or specifications after a contract for the construction has been awarded shall be made only by means of change orders approved by the Division of the State Architect (DSA). This interpretation describes a process for obtaining approval of changes by DSA.

**Discussion:** Section 4-338 (c) and (d), Part 1, Title 24, California Code of Regulations (CCR), describes DSA's process for approval of "change orders" and "preliminary change orders." DSA has determined that to provide timely, efficient and consistent approval of changes during construction, enforcing the strict letter of regulations may require flexibility. An alternate "field change document" approval process is described in this IR. This process focuses the designer's and DSA's efforts on code compliance with the goal of timely review and approval.

**Definitions.** The following definitions apply to terms used in this document:

**Approved Documents** – Plans, specifications, addenda, deferred approvals, field change documents, and change orders bearing a valid DSA approval stamp. A valid DSA approval stamp includes the DSA application number for the project, the initials of the plan reviewer(s) and the date of approval. Stamps without the initials of the plan reviewer(s) and the date are NOT indicative of approval.

**Change** - Changes to the approved plans or specifications include revisions, deletions, additions, and substitutions to the work prescribed on the approved plans or specifications.

**Change Order** – A document defining changes to the DSA approved plans and/or specifications issued after a construction contract has been awarded. Change orders may also define changes to contractual requirements, including costs and time requirements that are not regulated by the California Building Code.

**Clarification** - a statement from the architect or engineer in general responsible charge of the project that clarifies (but does not change) the requirements of the DSA approved plans and/or specifications.

**Contract** – A document that defines the cost or value of some or all of the construction work. When labor and/or materials are donated, or provided by the school district/owner, the value of the materials and/or work must be estimated and reported to DSA on Form DSA-102 as if there was an actual "contract" for that work. Also, contracts for construction management must be reported on Form DSA-102.

**Design Professional** – An individual listed on application Form DSA-1 Lines 4, 5, 6 or 7.

**Field Change Document (FCD)** – A document defining changes to the Code regulated construction requirements of the DSA approved plans and/or specifications issued after a

construction contract has been awarded. FCDs may include Architect's Supplemental Instructions (ASI), Instruction Bulletins (IB), Field Orders (FO), Construction Change Directives (CCD), etc.

**Drawing** – an illustration on paper larger than 8 1/2 x 14.

**Interpretation** – a statement from the architect or engineer in general responsible charge of the project that interprets (but does not change) the requirements of the DSA approved plans and/or specifications.

**Sketch** – an illustration on 8 1/2 x 11 or 8 1/2 x 14 paper.

**1. Scope.** After a contract for construction has been awarded, DSA approval of changes to approved documents shall be obtained in accordance with the following:

**1.1 Changes That Require DSA Approval Prior to Construction.** DSA approval shall be obtained for changes to all Code-regulated construction and inspection/testing functions prior to commencement of the affected work. Changes can be approved through the field change document (FCD) approval process described in Section 3.1 below or the change order process described in Section 3.2. DSA-approved FCD, or change order, documents shall be in the possession of the contractor and the inspector prior to construction of the work shown thereon.

"Code-regulated" refers to work that is regulated by the provisions of Title 24 of the California Code of Regulations applicable to the construction, including those amendments to the Code adopted by DSA-SS (Structural Safety), DSA-AC (Access Compliance), and the SFM (State Fire Marshal). For projects submitted under the 2001 CBC, refer to 2001 CBC, Part 2, Sections 101.17.11 (DSA/AC), 101.17.12 (DSA/SS), and 101.17.14 (SFM). [For projects submitted under the 2007 CBC, refer to 2007 CBC, Part 2 Section 101.3.2 items 4, 10 (DSA/AC), 11 (DSA/SS) and 14 (SFM)].

Note that although DSA does not currently conduct a specific review of certain aspects of construction (including mechanical, electrical, etc) these aspects are considered to be "Code regulated" and must be submitted as part of an FCD or change order.

DSA approval is also required for all change orders.

**1.2 Changes That Do Not Require DSA Approval.** DSA approval is not required for FCDs if the scope of the change does not pertain to Code-regulated construction (refer to Section 1.1 above). For example:

- Color of finishes, and
- Administrative changes to the contract (e.g. contract time extension).

**1.3 Interpretations and Clarifications.** Responses to request for information, interpretations, clarifications, and other communications that do not change the requirements of the DSA stamped approved documents may be issued by the architect or engineer in general responsible charge. These documents do not require DSA approval.

**2. General Requirements.** All change orders and field change documents must conform to the following general requirements (see sample change order, which includes a sample FCD, in the appendix):

**2.1** The project name and the name of the facility must be indicated.

**2.2** The DSA file and application numbers must be shown in the upper right hand corner.

- 2.3** All FCDs and change orders shall be numbered in sequence in a logical and consistent manner. The number must be shown in the upper left corner.
- 2.4** All changes must be described clearly and completely by the architect in general responsible charge of the project and/or architects or engineers with delegated responsibility for portions of the project as defined on Form DSA-1 – Application for Approval of Plans and Specifications.
- 2.5** Reference to the specific portions of the drawings and/or specifications that are being changed must be included. All details and specification sections affected by the change shall be coordinated. If a change to a detail is only applicable in some of the locations for which the detail applies, those locations must be clearly described.
- 2.6** Changes to any testing or inspection requirements associated with the proposed change must be clearly described.
- 2.7** The number of pages in the FCD or change order, including the number of pages in each attachment, shall be clearly indicated. All sketches and drawings attached to describe the changes shall be clearly labeled and referenced.
- 2.8** When approved drawings are revised and reissued as part of an FCD or change order all of the following requirements must be met:
  - 2.8.1** Images of all DSA approval stamps must be removed from the drawing (or crossed out) prior to making any changes.
  - 2.8.2** Each change shall be highlighted on the drawing and identified (see example change order attached in appendix).
  - 2.8.3** Each change shall be dated.
  - 2.8.4** All drawings shall be stamped and signed by the design professional in general responsible charge. When preparation of a drawing has been delegated to another design professional that individual shall also stamp and sign the drawing.
- 2.9** FCDs and change orders should include only clear instructions on specific changes to details on the DSA approved drawings or sections of the DSA approved specifications. When circumstances make it necessary to submit additional back up information the following requirements shall be met:
  - 2.9.1** Calculations, product “cut-sheets” and other back-up information necessary to demonstrate that the changes are Code compliant shall be submitted along with (but not as part of) the FCD or change order. Calculations or other information that is not necessary to define the work required shall not be placed on sketches or drawings included in an FCD or change order.
  - 2.9.2** Cost estimates, cost justifications, or other back-up documents that are not necessary to define the changes to the DSA approved drawings or specifications need not be submitted to DSA. If back-up information is submitted for any reason, it must be separate from the FCD or change order.
  - 2.9.3** For work involving alterations to existing buildings it is sometimes expedient to submit drawings of the existing building as back-up information to clarify or justify the acceptability of proposed changes. DSA will return existing building drawings when the architect or engineer clearly requests the return of such drawings in advance.
- 2.10** A reason shall be provided for each change.
- 2.11** The appropriate design professional (listed on application Form DSA-1) must sign the FCD or change order (change orders must also be “stamped”).

**2.12** All engineers or architects for whom responsibility for portions of the work has been delegated must sign the FCD or change order when their portion of the work may be affected by the changes (change orders must also be "stamped").

**2.13** Space (2 in. x 3 in.) for a DSA approval stamp must be provided.

**3. Approval Process.** The design professional shall obtain DSA approval for changes to the approved plans or specifications in accordance with Section 3.1 or 3.2. DSA shall direct all communications (review comments and/or approved documents) to the responsible design professional.

**3.1 Field Change Document Approval (FCD) Process.** This process can provide responsive processing of documentation for changes that require DSA approval prior to construction of the work shown thereon (refer to 1.1). FCDs do not require documentation of school board approval.

Change documents can be transmitted via fax or other expedient means for review by DSA (recommend faxable format of 8-1/2 x 11, with design professional's phone/fax number noted). DSA can communicate review comments and approved FCDs to the responsible design professional via fax or mail.

Information required to be provided with an FCD submittal is listed in Section 2 above.

**3.2 Change Order (CO) Approval Process.** DSA approved FCDs are not required to be included in a formal change order. DSA stamped approved FCDs may be included in formal change orders and are not subject to further technical review. If an approved FCD is incorporated into a change order, the complete FCD bearing the approval stamp of DSA shall be attached and referenced in the change order. All documents included which do not bear a DSA approval stamp will be reviewed for Code compliance.

The design professional shall submit two copies of each change order to DSA for review and approval; one copy of the approved change order shall be retained by DSA and one returned to the design professional. Back-up information and extra copies of change orders will NOT be returned (exception: see 2.9.3 above).

General information required to be provided with the change order submittal is listed in Section 2 above; additional information required for change orders includes:

- Stamp (in addition to signature) of the architect or engineer in general responsible charge and of each consultant delegated responsibility for work affected by the change order.
- Contract number when more than one contract is awarded for the project,
- Cost information, and
- Signature of the School District (owner).

**4. Design Professionals' Duties.** The design professionals have specific Code-prescribed duties with regard to changes to the approved plans and/or specifications. (See Sections 3-341, Part 1, Title 24, CCR.)

**4.1 Documentation/Processing.** The design professional shall prepare FCDs and change orders as required by conditions on the project and shall make corrections as required to comply with the regulations.

- 4.2 Signing/Stamping.** The design professional shall stamp and sign all documents (note that all “drawings” must be stamped and signed; all “sketches” must be signed).
- 4.3 Communications.** The design professional shall provide the contractor, testing laboratory, and the inspector with DSA stamped approved documents prior to commencement of Code-regulated work shown thereon.
- 4.4 Final Verified Report.** The design professionals’ final verified report (Form DSA-6A/E) shall indicate the total number of change orders issued.
- 4.5 Cost Summary.** The design professional shall report the total final construction cost of the project on Form DSA-6A/E. The construction cost shall include the final amount of all construction contracts, construction management agreements, and estimated value of all construction work performed by volunteers or school district employees.
- 5. Inspector's Duties.** The project inspector has specific Code-prescribed duties with regard to changes to the approved plans and/or specifications issued in the field. (See Section 4-342. Part 1, Title 24, CCR.)
- 5.1 Record-keeping.** The inspector shall maintain a file of approved FCDs and change orders on the job at all times. The inspector is required to maintain complete records of these documents. These documents shall be maintained in an organized manner so that they are readily available.
- 5.2 Communications.** If the inspector determines that unapproved documents appear to require DSA approval (the document directs a change to Code-regulated construction), the inspector shall notify the design professional and DSA immediately. Any work performed that is not in accordance with DSA approved documents must be reported as a deviation.
- 5.3 Final Verified Report.** The inspector's Final Verified Report (form DSA-6) shall indicate the total number of change orders received and implemented.

## APPENDIX

- Sample Change Order
- Sample Field Change Document (FCD)

**Change Order #: 2**  
**Contract #: 1**DSA File #: 99-123  
Application #: 02-123456

Project:  
Perfectly Designed Elementary School  
123 School Drive  
Smallville, CA 91020

Really Smart Architects  
432 Professional Drive  
Emerald City, CA 90210  
Phone #: 916-445-8100  
Fax #: 916-445-8100

To:  
Excellent Contractors  
654 Concrete Road  
City of Industry, CA 92010

The contract is changed as follows:

1. Revise specification section 12512 to eliminate all reference to horizontal louver blinds.

Requested by: Owner

Reason: Window coverings will be provided in another contract

Credit \$ <960.00>

2. Refer to detail 17 on sheet A57. Add treated wood buck, 7/8" thick x width of CMU wall, at each jamb of door 710. Secure to masonry with 1/4" diameter expansion anchors with 1-1/4" embedment at 24" on center.

Requested by: Architect

Reason: To allow for proper installation of door.

Add \$ 760.00

3. Refer to attached FCD #1 (1 page). Change maximum non-shrink grout thickness from 1/2" to 1".

Requested by: Contractor

Reason: Elevator was installed on 1" of grout; owner will accept this deviation for a credit.

Credit \$ <100.00>

4. Increase contract time by seven working days.

Requested by: Contractor

Reason: Rain delays

**Total Cost of This Change Order:**

**Credit \$ <300.00>**

The original Contract Sum was .....	\$900,000.00
Net change by previously authorized change orders .....	\$ 0.00
The contract sum prior to this change order was .....	\$900,000.00
The contract sum will be (decreased) by this change order by .....	\$ <300.00>
The new contract sum including this change order will be .....	\$899,700.00

The contract time will be (increased) by ..... (7) working days  
The date of substantial completion as of the date of this change order is **May 1, 2006**

Architect:

\_\_\_\_\_  
Frank L. Wright, Architect  
Really Smart Architects  
(affix stamp here)

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Structural Engineer:

\_\_\_\_\_  
Joe Excellent, President  
Excellent Engineering, Inc.  
(affix stamp here)

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Owner:

\_\_\_\_\_  
Hal T. Computer, Director of Facilities  
Smallville Unified School District

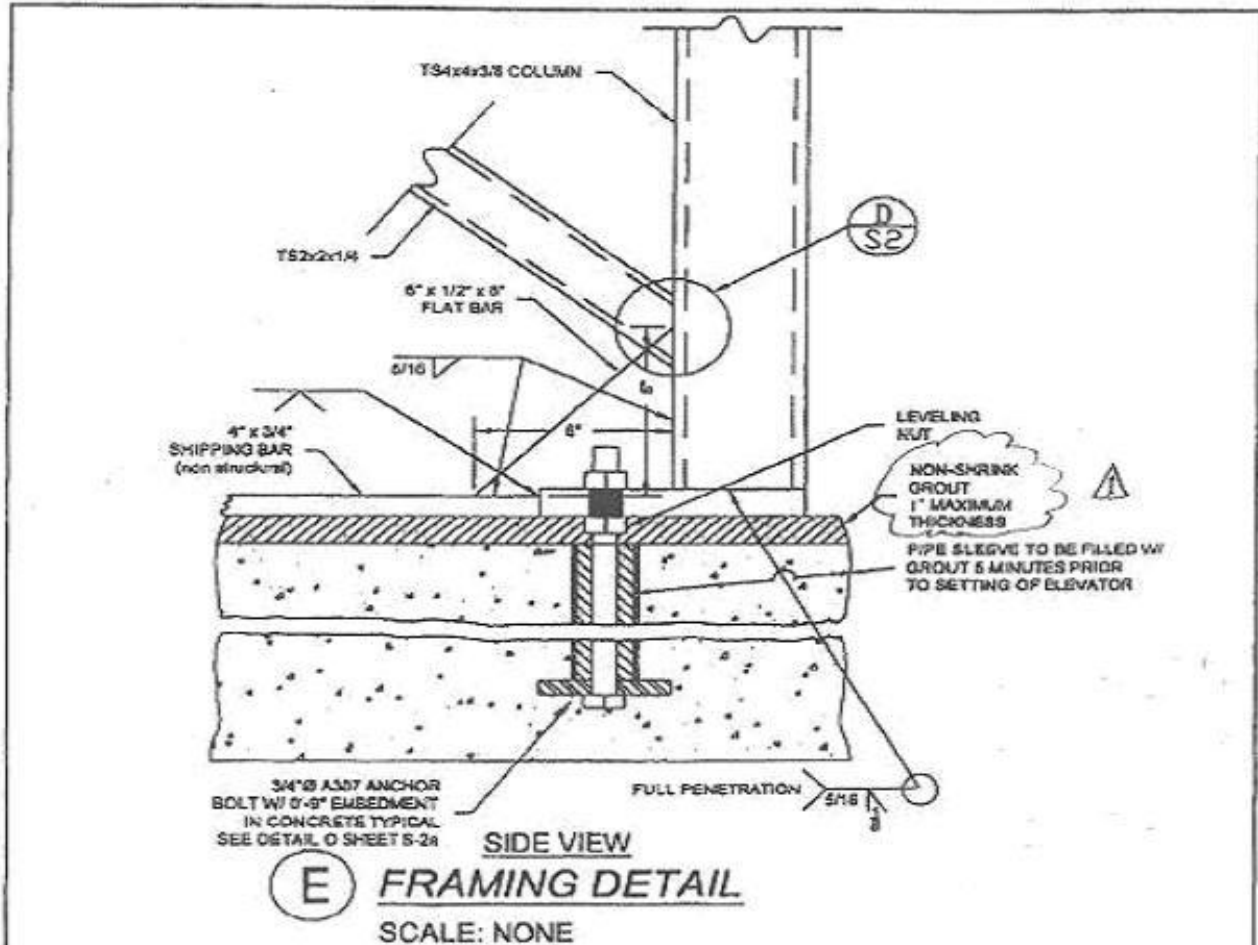
Date: \_\_\_\_\_

(space for DSA approval stamp)

# FIELD CHANGE DOCUMENT #: 1

DSA File #: 99-23  
Application #: 02-123456

Revise Detail E on sheet S2 as shown below. Change maximum non-shrink grout thickness from 1/2" to 1".



Division of the State Architect Approval Stamp

CHANGE ORDER DRAWING FOR:

PROJECT NAME: Perfectly Designed Elementary School

DATE: 9/16/05

DSA APPLICATION# 02- 123456

FILE# 99-123

Design Professional Signature: Frank L. Wright  
(Individual listed on application)

Reference shi S-2, Detail E side view

Issue Date: 9/16/05

## STRUCTURAL HOISTWAY DETAILS

SIZE	REV	REV. DATE	FILE NO.	SHEET 1 OF 1
A	1	12-20-05		
SCALE:	N.T.S.	DATE: 9/16/05 T.H.	OWC NO.	S-2a

FIELD TRIP#2- ITEM 6